1:Beals E-5 (1940-1941)1946 NU34 Tarasco NU34
[p. 202-b] Sierra Tarascans

753 are recognized as of mechanical origin. Some diseases are vaguely regarded as of natural causation and as possibly contagious; others are clearly of supernatural character even though curable by natural means, although the line between the two is not sharp. In either case, herbs, unguents, and drugs are believed capable of helping the sickness. To utilize these methods of curing requires no special ability but merely knowledge. Many minor ailments are treated at home; the curer is merely a 759 person of greater knowledge who is called in when home remedies fail or the case is obviously beyond the knowledge of the household. Similarly, the doctor at Parácho is called only when the curer fails or the case is believed beyond the curer's powers. Obviously, this situation has not greatly enhanced the reputation of the doctor, for most of his patients are nearly moribund some hours before he can reach them.

Curers usually make a diagnosis first. No 757 information on methods could be secured. It appears that a visual inspection and questioning of the patients are parts of the diagnosis, and possibly the only diagnosis. Once the diagnosis is made, the curer decides what steps to take to cure the patient. Often herbs kept on hand can be used; others, however, must be specially sought because they must be collected either fresh or at certain hours of the day.

In general, sickness by some is related to the 753 strength of the blood which resides below the [826] nape of the neck. This is also the location of the individual's life. Persons with much blood are healthy. When persons are seriously ill, it is because their blood is scanty; when there is insufficient to nourish the "seat of life," the person dies. There are also vague concepts of sickness being caused by "heat" or "cold," (sophisticated Agustín attributed a cold to drinking water while sweating) "airs" (which may also be either hot or cold), fright (*espanto*), and, much more specific, evil eye.

Broken bones are treated by specialists, who 752 may also be curers of diseases or, in one case [759] at least, midwives. The bones are manipulated into place and bound to splints without other treatment.

Dislocations are massaged repeatedly with olive oil until the bones are back in place. They

753 swellings occur in the breast, ribs, or back.
757 A curer specializing in this ailment discovers the seat of the pain by feeling with her fingers. She then anoints the area with unguents purchased in the stores. If the first ones do not work, she then tries others.

[826] The blood of animals is generally regarded as bad and dangerous. The black blood from a butchered animal will cause ulcers if it falls on the skin. The cure is to cauterize the ulcers with a hot iron. The danger from animal blood is said to be the reason many people will not use meat until several days after butchering.

757 There are a number of treatments of illness
278 which are quite generalized, that is, they may be used on a variety of occasions. For example, *amargo*, is taken in the morning before eating to cure rheumatism, *bilis*, and "fright." *Amargo* is *aguardiente* in which cinnamon bark, sugar, lemon juice, and lemon rind have been steeped for 2 or 3 days. Roses of castile, made into infusions, may be used for any sort of pain or sickness. Persons on the verge of death may sometimes be brought back by putting an onion under their nose or blowing tobacco smoke in their face. A mild diet is frequently used regardless of the illness. Milk and oatmeal gruel are the two most preferred items. Nurite, a common herb used in cooking, is also widely used for stomach disorders and colics. *Romero, quién sabe*, and *yerba buena* are also widely used herbs. Additional herbal remedies have been collected, but the plants have not yet been identified.

753 Of considerable interest is a class of diseases
754 and ailments which seem to be of supernatural causation. Witchcraft, which has already been discussed (p. 156), is an important cause of illness and death. Others are č'érpiri or jándaku íri ("fright," *espanto*), tariáta pákata ("wind," *aire* or *viento*), and éskukata (evil eye or *mal de ojo*).

753 Some informants believed that "fright" was
755 something attacking only drunkards and persons who went about at night, and considered it merely seeing ghosts or similar imaginary supernatural things. A curer, however, described to Rendón an elaborate treatment for the disease. The curer puts a bit of cotton over the end of the index finger of her right hand. Over this she puts a green tomato, preferably